



WESTSIDE NEWSLETTER



Supported by Westside Resource Centre and Galway City Partnership - Westside Project

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Westside Growing Strong

Spring is here and those with green fingers are feeling the call of the great outdoors. It's time for sowing and planting and Westside Community Garden is again buzzing with activity. The garden is now coming back to life after a deep winter sleep and fairly soon new growth will emerge. All those organic inputs will work their fertile magic and before long a wonderful array of vegetables, herbs and fruit will once again be growing strong. However, the serious work of spring time gardening begins now and that long 'labour of love' - watering, weeding, thinning and coaxing - starts all over again. Last

completed gardening classes and they have now emerged as regular attendees in the community garden. The enjoyment and learning goes on throughout the year as participants attend both formal workshops and regular 'hands on' gardening sessions. There are also occasional social events to share ideas, to celebrate success and to develop links with other community gardens in the city.

Whilst the physical work of gardening goes on in accordance with the seasons we are also looking at ideas to further develop the



Artist's impression of the Westside Community Garden

year the garden produced some fine vegetables - lovely white floury potatoes, delicious carrots and beautiful green cabbage to name but a few. We are looking forward to this year's crop!

We have used the dormant winter months to complete most of the heavy 'infrastructure' work in the garden. New pathways, drainage pipes, patios and a garden shed have all been installed and the garden has really taken on its finished shape. Over the past few years considerable time and effort has gone into planning and training for the development of the garden itself and also to build up the capacity of the participants. A large number of local people have

broader potential of the garden. As well as the obvious benefits of bringing people together in an exciting community project there are also a number of other positive avenues which can be explored - Health & Nutrition, Cookery, Food Storage & Preservation, Environmental Sustainability and so on. It will be great to see Westside Community Garden emerge as a 'proving ground' for community initiatives in these areas and we aim to work towards these and other projects in the months and years ahead.

The day-to-day operation of Westside Community Garden is carried out by a group of fantastic local volunteers. The project is also supported by a working group made up of representatives from the local community, Westside Resource Centre, Galway City Partnership, Le Chéile Westside, Galway City Council, City of Galway VEC and the HSE.

Self Help Africa

Westside Resource Centre wishes to extend a very warm welcome to Ronan Scully and Self Help Africa who have just moved into a new office here in the resource centre.

Contact Ronan on 087-6189094 or ronan.scully@selfhelpafrica.org

Westside Resource Centre, Seamus Quirke Rd.,
(091) 528325 - info@westsideresourcecentre.ie
www.westsideresourcecentre.ie

Galway Volunteer Centre

We have set up a new **Volunteer Point** in Westside Resource Centre. Ruth is at the centre on the 3rd **Thursday** of every month from 10:00am to 1:00pm with information about volunteering opportunities in the local community.

Contact us on **091-581727** or visit www.volunteergalway.ie

Westside Age Inclusion Laundry Service

Westside Age Inclusion offers a low-cost laundry service to the general public in all areas of Westside and environs. We collect your washing from your home and then wash/dry and deliver it back to you. The money raised is put back into the community through the provision of support services and activities for older people.

- Large bag washed and dried: €10.00
- Small bag washed and dried: €7.00
- Drying only: €5.00

Tel: 091-589861

Email: info@westsideageinclusionltd.ie



Westside Arts Festival

News has just emerged that the annual Westside Arts Festival will take place between 17th & 20th July 2013. Details remain sketchy but it appears that this year's festival will surpass all such previous events. Local people in Westside are already rearranging their schedules and diaries in order to attend this year's festivities. News of the festival has electrified the artistic community across Galway as artists and performers compete to gain a slot in this year's programme. Unofficial comments from an adviser who is said to be 'close' to the organising committee suggest that secret preparation work has in fact been going on for a number of weeks. There have also been strong indications that this year's festival events will appeal to all age groups and that the central theme will be 'Growing Our Community'. We will keep you informed of developments as they unfold.

Diabetes Ireland

Diabetes Ireland is the national charity for people with diabetes. We are committed to providing support, information and motivation for people with diabetes, their families and friends and to raise awareness of diabetes in the community and foster programmes for early detection and prevention.

Diabetes Ireland's head office is in Dublin and there are regional offices in Cork and Sligo. Elaine Newell is the Diabetes Development Officer for the West and covers counties Galway, Mayo, Roscommon, Clare and Limerick. Elaine runs the CODE programme (Community Orientated Diabetes Education), a Type 2 diabetes education programme in the community. The aim of the programme is to help people with Type 2 diabetes manage their condition. It covers diabetes topics such as healthy eating, physical activity, tips for lifestyle change and the principles of how you can play an active role in your own diabetes management. The programme takes place over 3 consecutive weeks for 2-hour sessions and a follow-up session at 6 months.

If you are interested in attending the CODE programme in Galway, please contact our Western office on our Sligo number 071-9146001 or email wro@diabetes.ie. Office hours are Monday-Friday 09:30-1:30pm.

For further information on diabetes and events running in your area, visit our website www.diabetes.ie

Pointing Volunteers in the Right Direction

Galway Volunteer Centre has recently set up a new volunteer point in Westside Resource Centre. As part of our outreach programme in the city and county, the volunteer point will act as a monthly clinic to anyone living locally in the Westside area who would like to find out about volunteering in their local community.

Anyone can attend and get information on volunteering opportunities in their own local area. Ruth Fagan, who works as a volunteer liaison officer with the centre, will be there on Thursday mornings once a month. She will be happy to sit down with

people and discuss their options as well as provide them with contact details for any of the volunteer roles on GVC's website.

An up-to-date list of current volunteer roles in the Westside area can be seen in the Resource Centre as well as Westside library and appointments can be made by calling the GVC office.

Anyone interested in finding out more can call Galway Volunteer Centre on 091-581727 or visit the website at www.volunteergalway.ie This is a free and confidential service.

MEAS Garda Youth Diversion Project

MEAS G.Y.D.P. (Garda Youth Diversion Project). Is a community based Project, managed by Foróige and run in conjunction with An Garda Síochána and the Irish Youth Justice System and is funded by the European Social Fund.

Our aim is to help young people (12-18 years of age) move away from behaving in a way that might get them or their friends into trouble with the Gardaí. We work closely with the Garda Juvenile Liaison Officer and Community Gardaí, with local Primary and Secondary Schools, and agencies such as the H.S.E. Westside Family Services.

We do this, so that we can engage with the young person and help them reflect on their behaviour. An example of our work is a group of young people from the project learned some new engineering skills after completing a short course in GMIT,



A group from the MEAS Project with their completed projects in GMIT.

delivered by Electronic & Electrical Engineering students in the college. The young people attending weekly classes taught by a group of second year students on the Bachelor of Engineering degree in Electrical Services and Automation. They learned how to make electrical games and found out what it is like to be a third-level student in GMIT.

For more information, contact Project Workers Adrian McGrath 086-7741623 or Anthony Cunniffe 086-0479707

Creative in Westside

Do you have a longing to put pen to paper and to write like a prolific author? Do you dream of getting lost in the fluid brush strokes of your own oil paintings? If you have answered yes to either of these questions then you should consider doing a short class to get those creative juices flowing. At Westside Resource Centre we are blessed to have a number of different courses running which provide a creative outlet for people interested in developing their skills.

Writer and poet Kevin Higgins holds a regular creative writing course here at Westside Resource Centre. Kevin has a very loyal following of emerging writers attending his classes and is well known for his excellent work across Galway and beyond. To contact Kevin, please call 087-6431748.



Artist Pearl O' Kennedy provides a weekly painting class each Monday afternoon. Pearl works with oil paints and has a great love of Galway City's streetscapes as the subject matter of her paintings. Pearl O' Kennedy can be contacted on 085-7390002.

If you prefer evening times, author and coach Mairéad Whyte also runs a creative writing class on Monday evenings. Mairéad has written a number of books, is an

inspirational tutor and is known for her 'direct and fun' approach. Please call 083-0020280 to speak to Mairéad.

We are always very happy to provide a venue for such wonderful course providers and would be delighted to hear from any artists or tutors who would like to set up a class here in Westside.



"Once upon a time in the Westside..."

“SAT NAV” Workshop - The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Families

Due to the ending of the so called ‘Celtic Tiger’ the family unit as we know it has to adapt itself to new challenges. Each member of the family will have strengths and weaknesses and learning to keep in balance is the key to a happy family life. To try and achieve this is a struggle facing every family. Having respect and understanding for each other can go a long way in having a stable family life.

Good family habits are not an accident. They either have been passed down from our own family or we have picked them up from friends, books, etc. The same is true for bad habits. During the workshop, we will study and discuss the different ways to communicate more effectively with our spouses and our children. We will also



practice the seven habits as outlined by **Stephen Covey**, in *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Families*

This workshop is scheduled for Autumn 2013. For further details, contact Imelda on 086-6098887 or sisterimelda@gmail.com

“Computer Tutor” - Classes for Beginners

Westside Resource Centre is launching a new “Computer Tutor” initiative to provide low-cost computer classes to members of the local community. The classes are aimed at beginners and will help participants get to grips with the basic operation of computers for such things as typing a letter, browsing the internet, using email and communicating via Skype.

The course will take place in the Resource Centre and will run in the afternoons one day a week for eight weeks. Each session will consist of one-and-a-half hour's tuition followed by an additional hour during which participants will have the opportunity to

practise what they have learnt or focus on an aspect of computing that they find particularly interesting. The tutor will remain on hand during this last hour to answer any questions participants may have about computer-related topics.

This course is being offered for the very affordable price of €25 per participant and includes refreshments. Class size will be limited to ten students to ensure optimal benefit for the participants.

For further information, please call 091-528325 or drop in to Westside Resource Centre, Seamus Quirke Road, Galway.

Epilepsy Ireland

Brainwave – The Irish Epilepsy Association is now known as **Epilepsy Ireland**. The launch of the new name took place ahead of European Epilepsy Day on February 11th.

At a time when people are encouraged to speak more openly about epilepsy, we need to lead the way with a name that doesn't hide the condition we represent. By making our name shorter and simpler, we believe that the task of raising public awareness of epilepsy across the country and eliminating epilepsy stigma will be easier to achieve.

The name change is also aimed at improving name recognition of our organisation. In a recent survey, only 15% of people questioned were able to identify the name *Brainwave* with the condition of epilepsy. This confusion can have a negative impact on many areas of our work, including reaching out to people with epilepsy, our advocacy work, raising

awareness and fundraising.

Unlike Brainwave, the name **Epilepsy Ireland** does exactly what it says on the tin! While our name is changing, our vision “to achieve a society where no person's life is limited by epilepsy” will remain at the heart of everything that we do. We are still committed to meeting the needs of individuals in Ireland with epilepsy and supporting their families and carers, as we have been doing since 1966.

Our logo still contains an updated version of the light bulb image used for many years. The light bulb represents the idea of “shining a light on epilepsy”, a theme that is used by many epilepsy organisations around the world.

For further information about Epilepsy Ireland, please contact Evelyn at 091587640 or Head Office: 01 4557500.

Westside Men's Group

The Westside Men's Group meet each Monday night from 7 to 9pm in the Westside Resource Centre. Activities for 2013 include: Computers (Excel, Blogspot & design), Painting on glass and Cooking on a budget

The Men's Group is supported by Galway City Partnership – Westside Project, City of Galway VEC, HSE West and Westside Resource Centre.

Contact: menclubwrc@gmail.com or 091-528325.

Westside Community Patchers (Patchwork & Quilting Club)

The Westside Community Patchers started on 6 Feb 2011 after a group of women completed a beginners course in patchwork and wanted to continue with the craft. The club gets together every Thursday morning for patching, quilting, chatting and cuppa-drinking, 10am to 12 noon, in the Westside Resource Centre. Since starting, the group has worked on many small projects and has also made a number of quilts that were raffled in aid of several local charities. The club is made possible by funding from Galway VEC, Galway City Partnership and, of course, the Westside Resource Centre – we are very grateful to all of these. All are welcome, so do drop in if you fancy finding out what it's all about.

Have You A Little Time To Make A Big Difference?

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Ireland is an internationally renowned youth mentoring programme. This programme is operated by Foróige, the national youth development organisation. It is based on the idea that having a caring adult friend can build positive assets in young people, enabling them to develop:

- their character and talents
- a positive sense of self and their future
- a commitment to learning
- social competencies of making friends, planning, decision making, and resisting negative behaviours
- positive values of caring, honesty, integrity, responsibility.

We are currently recruiting volunteers who have 1-2 hours a week to make a very positive impact on the life of a young person.

Contact: Andrea on 087-7006268 or Kate on 086-0244650.

Well-being in Westside

The stresses and strains of life's ups and downs can take their toll and sometimes it's important to pause, to think and to find a quiet space for ourselves and our own well-being. During the course of the year a number of different events have taken place in the Westside Resource Centre which have had a particular focus on wellness, well-being and reflection. For example, there are often weekly Meditation classes which take place in the evenings and run throughout most of the year. Galway City Partnership's - 'Westside Project' have also organised a number of Woman's Wellness classes and these are also always very well attended. We regularly provide space for Yoga classes and there have also been a number of once-off workshops focusing on health and well-being. We hope that these events will continue in the months ahead and more details on such courses and the course providers are available at reception.

Westside Craft Group



The Westside Craft Group are going strong since 2011. Fun and sharing of talents is the main function of the group and this is evidenced by the wonderful creations that will be on display during the Westside Arts Festival. The group meet every Monday morning from 9:30 to 12:30.

Back to Education Initiative (BTEI) Courses

Galway City Partnership and City of Galway VEC have been involved in running numerous Back To Education Initiative (BTEI) Courses in the Westside Resource Centre since January of this year. These accredited courses include Healthcare, Childcare, Communications and Computers.

It is hoped another set of BTEI courses will be running in September with recruitment to begin during the summer.

Contact Seamus at Galway City Partnership 091-773466 or seamus@gcp.ie

Westside Resource Centre provides photo-copying, faxing and laminating services to members of the public. Just ask at Reception.

Westside Resource Centre, Seamus Quirke Road, Galway. 091-528325

Self Help Africa – Westside Coffee Morning



Self Help Africa is an Irish development agency that has been working for the past 30 years to eradicate hunger and poverty, and support African farmers to earn more from their land. The organisation works only with local staff and partners in eight African countries, and over the past few decades has helped millions of rural Africans to grow

more, to earn more, and to develop new enterprise and ways of making a living to support their families. **Ronan Scully of Self Help Africa will host a Coffee Morning on Friday the 26th of April in Westside Resource Centre from 10am to 12 noon. Contact Ronan on 087-6189094 or ronan.scully@selfhelpafrica.org**

Organisations based in Westside Resource Centre

Galway City Partnership - Westside Project

Galway City Partnership - Westside Project coordinates and supports community work and participation in the Westside area. The project is actively engaging with numerous individuals, agencies and service providers in the area to ensure the needs of the community are being met and to empower local people for positive change. Activities are supported by City of Galway VEC, HSE West and Galway City Council. (Contact Sidikat on 091-528325 or 087-9303468).

Big Brother Big Sister

Big Brother Big Sister is an internationally renowned youth mentoring programme that forms friendships between a young person and an adult volunteer. This programme is operated in Ireland by Foróige, the national youth development organisation. The Galway regional office is based in the Westside Resource Centre. (Contact Andrea or Kate on 091-554420).

National Advocacy Service

The National Advocacy Service aims to provide independent advocates to people with disabilities who find it difficult to speak for themselves. (Contact Greg or Andrea on 091-528325).

Westside Crèche & Pre School

Westside Crèche & Pre School is a community based childcare service which aims to support and assist families and children in the Westside area through the provision of accessible, affordable, high quality childcare. (Contact Pauline on 091-581707).

Millstone House

Millstone House provides support and counselling referrals for the survivors of institutional abuse and their families. (Contact Tom on 091-528325 / EXT 136).

Self Help Africa

Self Help Africa works with rural communities to help them improve their farms and their livelihoods. (Contact Ronan on 087-6189094)

Epilepsy Ireland

Epilepsy Ireland provides a professional information service to support and empower people with epilepsy and their families, who have problems coming to terms with the condition and it's implications. (Contact Evelyn on 091-587640).

Involve

Involve provides programmes, initiatives and services that promote the participation and inclusion of the Traveller Community in Irish Society. (Contact Tracy or Louise [Salthill Youth Project] on 087-1810196).

MEAS Garda Youth Diversion Project

The GYDP is a community based and supported youth development projects which seek to divert young people from becoming involved (or further involved) in anti-social or criminal behaviour. These projects facilitate personal development and promote civic responsibility. (Contact Adrian or Anthony on 086-7741623 or 086-0479707).

OBAIR – Local Employment Service Network

The Local Employment Service Network (LESN) provides a free voluntary information, guidance and support service to people who are unemployed in Galway City. (Contact Mary or Pádraig on 091-581955)

Westside Resource Centre also provides meeting and training space for numerous other local and national groups and educational organisations including – Westside Men's Group, Shining Stars Women's Group, Galway Citizens' Information Centre, Westside Age Inclusion, City of Galway VEC, COPE, Galway City & County Childcare Committee, Youth Work Ireland, Incredible Years Parenting Programme, Westside Adult Literacy Support Project, Galway City Council, St. Vincent de Paul, P.L.A.N.T., The Learning Curve, HSE Safe Talk and A.S.I.S.T. course, Tara Kadampa Buddhist Meditation ... and many, many more.

DISCLAIMER: The opinions expressed in the contents of this newsletter are those of the author(s) of each piece and do not reflect the view of the Westside Resource Centre or Galway City Partnership - Westside Project.